

The Star-Studded 2024 HBCU Honors, Presented by P & G, Celebrating Black Excellence Premieres on BET Sunday, Dec. 1

Featuring Honorees Will Packer, Jewel Burks Solomon, Dr. Lonnie Johnson and viral-worthy acts Fantasia, MC Lyte, Hezekiah Walker, Erica & Krista Campbell & more

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[EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- [The 2nd Annual HBCU Honors, presented by Procter & Gamble](#), brings a celebration of Black

excellence to television audiences when it airs on [BET](#) on Sunday, December 1, 2024, at 8 PM ET. Taped at the historic Cramton Auditorium at Howard University, this star-studded event honored the extraordinary achievements of HBCU alumni, including this year's honorees Will Packer, Dr. Lonnie Johnson, and Jewel Burks Solomon.



The 2nd Annual HBCU Honors, Presented by Procter & Gamble, brings a one-of-a-kind celebration of Black excellence to television audiences when it airs on BET on Sunday, December 1, 2024, at 8 PM ET.

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Michelle Bailey, HBCU Honors Founder & Executive Producer

Hosted by award-winning actress and comedian Kym Whitley, a proud Fisk University alumna, the event highlighted the enduring legacy of HBCUs with inspiring performances, heartfelt tributes, and impactful moments of cultural pride. “For over 100 years, our schools have produced some of the most influential leaders in the Black community,” Whitley said. “Our hope and our progress rest on the shoulders of these leaders and the innovation of today’s graduates. Tonight, we celebrate and we honor them.”

The evening’s highlights included the presentation of the Industry Impact Award to Emmy-nominated filmmaker and

Florida A&M University graduate Will Packer. Introduced by his children, Nija and Zion Packer, the moment underscored his journey from a student at FAMU to a Hollywood powerhouse who has reshaped narratives for Black talent. "I stand on this stage because I was surrounded by a community that told me I was enough when others told me I was not," Packer shared. "I stand as a representative of a community that will not be stopped because we got each other."

Dr. Lonnie Johnson, a Tuskegee University graduate, former NASA engineer, and inventor of the Super Soaker, received the Innovation Trailblazer Award, presented by Marcos Purty, Vice President of Global Quality at General Motors. Reflecting on his contributions to science and engineering, Johnson emphasized the importance of creating a legacy for future innovators: "Black excellence is about setting the example for our youth because they are our legacy."

Jewel Burks Solomon, a Howard University graduate and a leading advocate for diversity in technology, was presented with the Founders Award by Kelesha Armand, General Counsel of Consumer Banking at JP Morgan Chase. "In light of a world that continues to undervalue our work and contributions, I want to remind us all that our dreams matter," Solomon said. "Your ideas, paired with your tenacity and the support of your community, can change the world."

The HBCU Honors Blue Carpet, hosted by Joe Clair and Autumn Joi Live, buzzed with excitement as notable guests arrived, including Grammy-nominated artist Raheem DeVaughn, HBCU Honors Founder Michelle M. Bailey, tech leaders Jeron Smith and Aloni Ford, reality stars Yandy Smith and Karen Huger, and Baltimore Mayor Brandon M. Scott. Attendees such as civil activist Jotaka Eaddy and former NFL player Marcus Allen highlighted the event's focus on community empowerment and educational advancement.



Hosted by Kym Whitley, HBCU Honors celebrates the remarkable achievements of industry icons, including Will Packer, Lonnie Johnson & Jewel Burks Solomon.



The 2nd Annual HBCU Honors concluded with a powerful finale featuring hip-hop icon MC Lyte, Hezekiah Walker, the Virginia Union Gospel Choir, and Erica and Krista Campbell.

The show opened with an electrifying performance by Be'la Dona, DC's legendary all-female Go-Go band, joined by the Howard University Ooh La La! dancers. Grammy Award-winning artist Fantasia delivered a soul-stirring medley of her hits, captivating the audience. Other standout performances included "The Voice" sensation Mac Royals, who performed Bobby Caldwell's "What You Won't Do for Love," and Imani-Grace Cooper, the HBCU Rising Star honoree, who dazzled with her performance of "Better." Erica Campbell and her daughter Krista Campbell performed their first nationally televised duet of Erica's hit song "Help," celebrating faith, family, and legacy.

Collaborations throughout the evening emphasized cultural pride and community impact. Grammy Award-winning poet J. Ivy and his wife Tarrey Torae announced a \$100M campaign to support HBCU students and honored the Divine Nine, joined on stage by national presidents and student representatives from each Black Greek-letter organization. Gospel icon Hezekiah Walker, accompanied by the Virginia Union University Gospel Choir, performed his classic "Every Praise," celebrating the newly established Hezekiah Walker Center for Gospel Music at Virginia Union University.

Throughout the evening, several significant contributions and initiatives were announced, reflecting the commitment of partners and individuals to advancing HBCU excellence. Dr. Glenda Glover, immediate past president of Tennessee State University and Vice Chair of the Biden-Harris White House HBCU Advisory Board, honored Vice President Kamala Harris as the inaugural HBCU Alumna of the Year. Mielle executives Monique Rodriguez and Omar Goff announced a multi-year partnership with the Hampton University Lady Pirates Basketball Team, including \$200K in funding, a \$100K endowed scholarship, and a mentorship program led by WNBA professionals.

Melonie D. Parker, Global Chief Diversity Officer at Google, unveiled a \$5M investment in Spelman College and a partnership with the National Education Equity Lab to bring the Google Data Analytics certificate to HBCUs and Title 1 high schools nationwide. Racquel Oden, Chair of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, presented a \$20K scholarship to Fayetteville State University student Alyssa Henson, while Walmart partnered with Fantasia to mentor aspiring entrepreneurs from Livingstone College and Johnson C. Smith University through the "HBCUers Dream Big" initiative. Jeron Smith, founder of The Incubation Lab, awarded a \$10K scholarship to Howard University student Suleni T. Sabio-Arzu, and Cameka Smith, founder of The BOSS Network, announced the continuation of the "Boss on Campus" initiative.

The show concluded with a powerful finale featuring hip-hop legend MC Lyte, Hezekiah Walker, the Virginia Union University Gospel Choir, and Erica and Krista Campbell performing Lyte's single "Thank You." Before the final performance, Michelle M. Bailey reflected on the event's significance: "My heart is truly full. This has been a beautiful night of Black excellence and HBCU Honors. I'm standing here on behalf of our ancestors, and I think they would be proud. This has been an incredible evening for our HBCU culture—a night to celebrate, honor, and elevate the legacy that binds us all."

With its unforgettable performances, impactful initiatives, and moments of cultural pride, the 2024 HBCU Honors continues to celebrate the legacy of HBCUs and inspire future generations. Don't miss the broadcast on BET, December 1, 2024, at 8 PM ET.

For more info on HBCU Honors, visit www.HBCUHonors.org, and follow @HBCUHonors on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

Tosha Whitten
FrontPage Firm
+1 202-246-7875

[email us here](#)

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